

## Enriching Fellowship Of Christmas

Read I John 1:1-7

"These things we write that our joy may be fulfilled."

That the Son of God became a person, a child of natural birth, is one of the most significant events in God's program. This child, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, is God's Message to us. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Because the Apostle John had been an ear-witness and an eye-witness he was divinely constrained to show unto us the Word of eternal life. His purpose in declaring Christ was "that ye also may have fellowship with us."

Fellowship means to have something in common with others, a community of interest and feeling. Those who have found Christ always experience a passionate longing to share their joy with others. Fellowship, it has been said, is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of the new life. Christ-centered Christmases leave sacred memories of fellowship that testify of themselves through the years that Christ is the Light of life.

Much that is called fellowship is not real fellowship. Men try to foster brotherhoods based on blood, political platforms, tolerance of all religions, etc. Such bonds are easily broken. There is no permanent fellowship, except among those who can say, "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

Only as men come to know God in Christ, and enter into fellowship with others who also love Him, can there be fulness of joy. It has been said that the isolated and solitary Christian can never be a happy Christian. The neglect of fellowship dries up the deeper sources of gladness within the soul.

To know and have fellowship with Him, who is light, is life's supreme blessing. It is a very special Christmas blessing to worship the Babe in the manger. Children have such a winning way of bringing love into otherwise cold hearts. How many cold hearts are not warmed by Christmas and the accompanying blessings of children's programs and worship services!

Our claim to fellowship with the Light of the world carries corresponding obligations "to walk in the light as He is in the light." To walk in darkness is the other alternative. "Darkness" spells sin, ignorance, error, superstition and everything that is foreign to the nature and will of God. To claim fellowship with Him, and, at the same time, to live for the very things He abhors is consummate hypocrisy. Both the lips and life of such a one are false.

But, "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

May this central Christmas blessing be yours in rich measure!

G. E. M.

Those who call themselves Christians and yet do not wish all others to be Christians are confessing the insecurity of their own faith. A church that is not dreaming in terms of presenting the gospel to all men is tacitly admitting that it has no message for any man.—Kenneth S. Latourett.

## Christmas Day--For Whom?

Luke 2:10

It's Christmas! Ah, the day for us much joy has always brought,  
The word holds charm for young and old—but have you ever thought  
Of those who nothing know about the Christmas peace and joy,  
Who never heard the story, dear to every girl and boy?  
The story of a little Babe, a manger and a star,  
Of angels singing and of wise men coming from afar,  
Their precious gifts of gold and myrrh and frankincense to bring,  
In adoration bowing low before the Baby King—  
You know the dear old story well, and why the Saviour came,  
But there are oh, so many, who have never heard His name!

A Christmas Day in Africa, in China and Japan;  
A Christmas Day in India and far off Afghanistan;  
A Christmas Day in all the world, the Islands of the sea,  
A Christmas Day for every one—that's how it ought to be!  
But—there can be no Christmas joy for those who've never heard  
This story—there can be no meaning in the word.

A Christmas Day in Heaven? Oh, think the angels know  
When Jesus' birthday comes and sing as they did long ago.  
Do you suppose they wonder why we're so slow to tell  
The tidings of great joy they sang that night and love so well?  
Sometimes I think they long to speed on eager wings away  
To tell the story of the King who came to earth one day.

But not to angels was His last commission: "Go  
Tell all the world"—it was to us; and oh, we've failed Him so!  
Shall we not give ourselves to Him and then go forth to share  
Our Christmas Day—our Christ—with needy, lost ones "Over there"?  
—Edith L. Young.

## The Man Next To Me!

A First Prize Short Story.

By ORVILLE SANDERSON, Jackson, Minn.

It was nearing the close of Christmas Day. It had been an exceptionally mild Christmas, and as I glanced over the western sky, before entering Trinity Church, I could see the redness of the sunset cast its crimson reflections on the snow-clad house tops.

Each year I had looked forward with anticipation to the annual Christmas concert of Trinity Choir; and tonight, Christmas night, had finally arrived for its presentation.

I arrived early in order that I might obtain my own choice of a seat. Already the pews were filling rapidly, and my choice was limited. But I was fortunate in being directed by the usher to a pew near to the section I would have chosen had the auditorium been entirely empty. And I breathed a sigh of satisfaction knowing that I was situated where I could hear the voices of the choir balanced at its best.

After having seated myself comfortably and having glanced over the concert program, I relaxed. But my congeniality was interrupted when the usher directed a strange old man to my pew, who, to my displeasure, was to sit next to me. Glancing at my neighbor-to-be, I was a bit irritated, perhaps, because I was either mindful of my own discomfort or felt that my ego would be disfavored.

He was decidedly a poor man. He wore an old, patched coat, and he held a weather-beaten cap in his brawny hands. I noticed the buckled overshoes on his feet, and they, too, were patched. However, he was closely shaven, and couldn't necessarily be condemned for uncleanness. And in spite of his appearance, he had a contented expression on his face, which might have served to hide his obviously poor situation.

I might even have sympathized with him; I don't know for sure. But to me, he was just a poor old man, whom I unrelentingly resolved to have nothing to do with. Yet, I concluded, I would have to sit next to him through the entire concert. My pride was hurt and I was downright disgusted!

I tried to forget the presence of my

company by once more directing my thoughts to the twilight service. Finally (and it seemed hours), the choir entered, marching down the centre aisle singing to the triumphal strains of "O Come, All Ye Faithful." It was an impressive introduction to a Christmas concert. The church had been decorated with wreaths and holly and two beautifully-shaped fir trees with their colored lights framed the choir at each side.

Thus I became absorbed in the concert. "O Holy Night" was the chorus' opening anthem, one that had often inspired me by its smooth and majestic music. Others followed, each one causing my very spine to shiver; and I drank in the beauty of it all, and I was moved—moved as far as the beauty of any music could ever move me. Music, I say, for to me it was only music—beautiful music presented in a reverent and inspiring atmosphere. And even though I might have known the words of each carol, they were words probably far from me—never applicable to myself—never the thought that I would need the message that sprang forth from those voices.

Suddenly I remembered my neighbor again—and I felt relieved that I was able to ward off my consciousness of him for a season. I had completely forgotten all about him! But how was he reacting to these hymns? Curiously, I glanced at him, and I was surprised at his expression. His eyes were filled with tears, and one was even running down his cheek. My heart must have melted, because I began to feel almost sorry for that poor old man!

It was intermission, and Trinity's pastor, Mr. Molle, gave a meditation—to which, unfortunately, I paid little or less heed—mostly less, I'm sorry to say.

The concert continued. "Away in the Manger," "Vigil," "Christmas Lullaby"—all of which were penetrating, powerful, heart-warming anthems of praise and adoration. Then the "Hallelujah Chorus" from "The Messiah"—sixty voices majestically sounding out its "hallelujahs." And I

(Continued on Page 2)

## Topics of Interest

### ABUNDANCE

Abundance—that characterizes the Christmas season. Look in at the store windows and see the display of toys and trinkets and more precious articles. There's an abundance of fruits and nuts and candy too. Watch the crowd of customers milling excitedly about, laden with bundles large and small. And out in the streets the night is resplendent with lights of every color.

The lobby at the post office is full of impatient customers waiting to receive or to send letters and parcels and greetings in such a volume that the enlarged staff of human machines behind the wicket almost despairs.

And in the homes—what an abundance of supplies and activity! Breads and cakes, cookies and pies are baked. Chicken or turkey or lute-fisk are prepared in plenty. The house is lavishly decorated and from a pyramid of gifts grows the Christmas tree gleaming with tinsels and glittering with lights.

The roads too, must know it's Christmas; for folks flock to Christmas concerts—a different place each night—until they are well nigh exhausted by the festivities.

So we could go on enumerating the abundance of articles and activities that fill our hearts and hands in the Christmas season. What is wrong with it? Perhaps nothing in particular. And yet it reminds me of the abundance of guests that crowded the infant Jesus out of the inn that first Christmas night. It reminds me too of Jesus' sadly reproachful warning to Martha, "Thou art cumbered with many things, but one thing is needful."

One thing out of the abundance of things is of supreme importance—Christ, Who came to bring us not a dissipating abundance of material things, nor an exhausting round of activities, but an abundance of life itself. "I came that ye might have life and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

This Christmas, every Christmas, in fact, all the time, we need to beware lest the abundance of things crowd out the real meaning of Christmas—Christ, the Life abundant. Give Christ room in your heart and you will have abundance of grace, fullness of joy and peace that passeth all understanding. May this abundance be yours this Christmas—and on through eternity.

A. K. H.

### When Their Ships Went Out

A rich man was down at the river front awaiting the departure of an ocean liner. He was joined by an acquaintance, who said to him, "You seem to be much pleased about something"

"Yes," said the man, "I do feel unusually good today. Do you see that vessel at anchor in the North River? Well, I have on that vessel ten thousand dollars worth of equipment for a hospital in China, and I just came down to see the vessel off."

"Well, that is interesting, and I am glad you made the gift," said the friend. "But you know I also have a gift on that ship. My only daughter is on that vessel, going to China to give her life as a missionary."

The wealthy man looked touchingly into the eyes of his friend and exclaimed, "My dear brother, I feel as though I have sacrificed more than I think of what this sacrifice means to you."—John Roach Straton.



## The Shepherd - Hyrden

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### IN PATHS OF PEACE

Deep in the heavens the stars shone in their eternal glory, lending phosphorescence to the newly fallen snow. From the church chimes came the melodious strains of an old hymn. Softly it began, with a low firm chord that permeated the still night. Steadily it grew, mounting note upon note, like a trickling stream born in ferny glades of the deep wood, ever deepening, widening, till, like the surge and flow of jubilant waters burst the glorious refrain, "Jesus Our Saviour is Here." In that moment the countryside paused. Once again it was the Christmas eve of two thousand years ago. The Star of Bethlehem shed its holy light over the humble stable where the Christ-Child lay cradled in His lowly manger. Once again the angels' song re-echoed the vaulted skies, the glory of God came to earth. A hallowed calm spread over the land as the last vibrating note of the chimes faded. Peace . . .

### "I AM THE BOOK"

Tribute to the Bible

By W. F. YUST

I am the recorder of the gate.

I speak every language under the sun, and enter every corner of the earth.

I bring information, inspiration, and re-creation to all mankind.

I am the enemy of ignorance and slavery, the ally of enlightenment and liberty.

I am always ready to commune with man, to quicken his being, to spur him on, to show him the Way.

I treat all persons alike, regardless of race, color, creed, or condition.

I have power to stretch man's vision, to deepen his feelings, to better his business, and to enrich his life.

I am a true friend, a wise counselor, and a faithful guide.

I am as silent as gravitation, pliant and powerful as the electric current, and enduring as the everlasting hills.

I AM THE BOOK.

### Epistle to the Romans

Chrysostom had it read to him once each week.

Melanchthon copied it twice with his own hand, in order to become better acquainted with it.

Luther called it the chief book of the New Testament, and the perfect gospel.

Coleridge regarded it as the profoundest book in existence.

Sir William Ramsey referred to it as the philosophy of history.

Godet spoke of it as the cathedral of Christian faith.

Dr. David Bacon said that the faith of Christendom in its best periods has been more indebted to this epistle than to any other of the Living Oracles.

Dr. W. H. Griffith Thomas asserted that a thorough study of Romans is a theological education in itself. He also said that a Christian life nourished in the Epistle to the Romans would never lack the three great requisites of clear perception, strong conviction, and definite usefulness.

—Selected.

## SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE FOR TROUBLED SOULS

(Translation from "Litt sjelesorg")

### QUESTION:

I admit that I am a worldly person but my intentions are to be converted some day because I do not want to be eternally lost. I dare not go through with it now because of my family and friends. They would not understand me so I simply couldn't do it now. Maybe I should move away into new surroundings. I am in constant fear that death will overtake me before I am saved. What advice would you give me?

### ANSWER:

Dear Friend: You are awakened to your need and that is the mighty work of the Holy Spirit in your heart. Even if it doesn't feel good, thank God for it. The thing that keeps you from being saved is fear of what people may think. You fear the sneers and comments of your friends. Do you know who is putting that fear into your heart? It is the devil. That is one of his age-long tricks. When he sees that a soul is coming into distress over his lost condition, the devil uses many ways to side-track the seeker.

Let me ask you first if it isn't worth a little scorn and talk to be saved from sin and to be a child of God. The disciples and early Christians were not only scorned but were lashed, thrown into prison, and stoned for their faith. Did that scare them out? No, it tells of their rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake.

I know how difficult it is to part with the world. It seems to involve breaking with all one's friends and getting them all against one.

I have this counsel to offer which many have found to be helpful: First, think of the issue—your undying soul. Eternal life with God, or eternal separation from God. Eternal joy or eternal torment—eternal peace or eternal anguish. Do not forget that eternal life begins here and now. "He that heareth my Word and believeth Him that sent me hath eternal life and shall not come into judgment for he has passed out of death into life."

In the second place, seek the counsel of some believer and tell him your desire to be a child of God. I know your pastor would be very glad if you came to him. When you have gone through everything with him and have yielded your life to God, you will discover it will be much easier to face the world. Even if you don't say a word, the world will soon observe a change in you. You will not feel at home with those who live worldly, sinful lives but will find your greatest joy among Christian friends.

It is my opinion that you will not be scoffed and laughed at for taking your stand with Christ. I believe that your friends will count you fortunate. In the quietness of their own souls they no doubt will envy you and wish that they might have the courage to make a similar choice. Who knows but what your surrender might be instrumental in winning others whom you see now living in open worldliness and sin.

Revivals in congregations often begin in just this way—there is one who comes through to personal faith in Christ, and that brings the many who are on the border to a similar experience.

In answer to your question about the advisability of going to another place in order to find it easier to break with your associates, I can say that I know of those who have done that. But you will have to make your stand known to your old friends anyway, will you not? The joy, power, and strength Jesus gives those who put their trust in Him more than compensates for any ridicule you may have to experience for His Name's sake. Try to find Christian friends. Attend a Bible School if you can.

Seek out the strength you get from Christian meetings.

In closing may I urge you to make your unconditional surrender to Jesus NOW. This night could be His last call to you. You are close to the Kingdom of God, and think if in eternity you should nurse the bitter memory that ALMOST you became a Christian, but lost!

\* \* \*

### QUESTION:

I am engaged to a Catholic girl and we have been planning our marriage, but now I discover we have to be married by a Catholic Priest, and I as a Lutheran have to sign an agreement that I will in no way try to influence my wife to become a Lutheran. If we have any children, I have to agree that they shall be reared as Catholics, and while I have no right to influence my wife, she is obliged to try to win me. If we aren't married by a Catholic Priest the Catholic church will not recognize our marriage as legal. I don't feel I can agree to these terms but at the same time I don't feel that I can break my promise since we have been engaged for a long time. What is best for both of us?

### ANSWER:

It happens not so seldom that Lutherans and Catholics fall in love with each other and become engaged. When it is time for marriage one finds out what control the Catholic church has over its members and over those who marry Catholics.

I understand that you have already had dealings with the Catholic priest. You will have much more to do with him, particularly if you refuse to agree to all the terms of the marriage contract. If your wife and children go to the Catholic church, you will be a lonely man in your own home. You cannot expect that if you are married by a priest that you can win your wife to your own faith. The church has such hold on its members that they scarcely dare to leave the church. Should she leave her church her whole relationship would look upon her as an apostate.

The question is, should you be married by the priest and become a Catholic so that you might have unity in your home? Many do just that without knowing much about the Catholic faith. It is a serious thing to commit oneself to a church that has so many teachings that are contrary to God's Word. Martin Luther withdrew from the Catholic church because he could not subscribe to all its teachings. The Pope excommunicated Luther from the church and from heaven, but Luther destroyed the papers. He stood firm on the teachings of God's Word.

There are many today, too, who likewise see the falacies in the Catholic church and withdraw from the church. There is, for instance, the unscriptural adoration of the Virgin Mary and the saints. Nowhere in the Word can we find justification for praying to the Virgin. Purgatory is another false teaching. That there is a middle place for souls not holy enough for heaven is absolutely contrary to God's Word, for Jesus who speaks most clearly about the after-life, never refers to more than two places—heaven and hell. It is a good source of income for the church to have a system of paying money and repeating prayers to deliver souls from purgatory into heaven. This is a dreadful traffic in souls and a downright sin. Just think what it will mean for these priests to stand with their people before the eternal Judge and know that they have deceived them, and the consequence of this deception is eternal separation from God. Another gross falsehood of the Catholic teaching is that the Pope is infallible and that what he says and interprets is as finding as what God

says. Even though what the Pope says is contrary to God's Word, the Pope's word is right.

Furthermore, the Catholic church teaches that we are saved by faith plus works. Recall how Martin Luther attempted by good deeds and denials of himself, and humiliations to the flesh, to find peace. Finally in his agony of soul he discovered anew a word in Romans 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and Romans 1:17, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith." Luther saw that it is by grace we are saved through faith, and not by works. That brought him peace. This is the basic doctrine of the Lutheran church and of all fundamental evangelical churches. The Catholics continue to teach that we must assist in the earning of our salvation by a system of merit:

When we see how unscriptural the Catholic church is on so many vital points, I can not advise you to become a Catholic in order to marry this girl. Think ahead a bit. Do you think you can yourself pray to the Virgin Mary or the saints? Would you like to hear your wife and children pray to them? In your heart you will know this is no better than the pagan worship of idols. Think far into the future. There will of necessity be disharmony in your home. So the best advice I can give you is that if your betrothed is persistent in remaining a Catholic that you dissolve your engagement now, for if you are a Christian you cannot possibly embrace the Catholic faith. Your marriage and home life are too important to begin with disunity. Neither one of you will have the happiness to which you are entitled.

S. H. Njaa.

## The Man Next to Me

(Continued from Page 1)

was proud of Trinity Choir—proud that it could even move a poor old man—I remembered again! The poor man beside me; I had once more forgotten him! I gave another casual glance toward him; and again his emotions were apparent. He must love that music very much too!

Before the concluding anthem, an offering was taken. And as the plates were to be distributed, announcement was made by the choir director that the choir wished to send the offering to the war-torn foreign field to be used for the rebuilding of the spiritual work there. A commendable cause, I thought to myself, and resolved to give more than usual. I withdrew a dollar bill. The poor man next to me had drawn something from his pocket, too, I noticed—a coin, no doubt. I might even have admired him for it!

Yet, as the plate came, I was reluctant in passing it to him. But he received it graciously and deposited his gift. I was amazed—bewildered! Not a coin, but a bill had fallen from his fingers. A number appeared plainly printed on the folded bit, and it stabbed me! Not a one but a five! The poor old man had given five dollars.

A heavy weight of guilt swept over me! Me—a man in a most favorable business position, giving one dollar; while a poor old man in rags gave five! Where was my ego now? What was I to be proud of?

I gave a gift I will never miss, with a sense of doing a favor. A poor man gave his living to help someone poorer than he! And yet, as I watched that poor old man trudge slowly down the street following the concert, I wondered—and asked myself—if that poor old man who sat next to me wasn't one of the richest men in the whole world! I'll wager he was!—Lutheran Herald.



Jeg er den gode Hyrde.  
Joh. 10:11

# Hyrden

JEG ER DØREN TIL FAARENE.—Joh. 10:7

—Wadena, Sask., Andet No. in December, 1947.

Den gode Hyrde setter sit  
liv til for faarene.  
Joh. 10:11

## Det Glade Budskap

Juledag—Luk. 2:1-14

Juleevangeliet er det glade budskap framfor alle andre. Hvorfor? Fordi det er det mektigste og viktigste budskap som noensinne har lydt ut over verden. Det er mektig og viktig fordi det er FORKYNT AV ENGLER TIL GUDS ÆRE.

Gud alene tilhører æren for at Jesus en gang aapnet sine øyne i Bethlehems stall. Og i dette barns menneskelige ansiktsdrag skimter vi den Hellige Guds eget ansikt. Det barnet er begynnelsen til et menneskeliv som vi alle kan øse div og salighet av for vaar sjel. For han er Gud selv som har tatt paa seg menneskelig skikkelse og steget ned i syndens og ufullkommenhetens verden. Men hva har vel formaadd Gud til en slik ydmykelse? Hans kjærlighet til oss syndere drev ham . . . For Gud saa nemlig at ikke engang den strengeste lov kunne makte aa tvinge oss motstrebende, egenvillige syndere inn paa retferdighetens vei. Han saa at ikke en gang den klareste undervisning ville overtyde oss om sannheten. Da maatte Gud selv komme. Han kom gjennom Sønnen, for ingen andre kunne representere Faderen. Og han kom som et lite barn for aa gjøre det lettere for oss aa ta i mot ham. For vi bøyer oss saa gjerne for et lite barn—uten tanke paa at det innebærer ydmykelse av vaart stolte jeg.

Dette barn skulle vinne oss for Gud. Han ville gi oss det vi mest av alt trenger: syndernes forlatelse, fred med Gud og det evige livs gave. Derfor kunne englene si: Forferdes ikke! for se, jeg forkynner eder en stor glede, som skal vederfares alt folket!

Saa trenger vi ikke lenger aa engstes og beve for Guds ansikt. For naa vet vi at barnet fra Bethlehem baade kan og vil frelse oss. Jesu fødsel er Guds ærefulle løsning paa det største problem menneskeslekten hadde grublet paa siden den katastrofale hendelse i Edens hage: Hvordan skal jeg finne en naadig Gud? Hvordan skal jeg kunne bli Guds barn igjen? Det gamle testamentes mennesker søkte forgjeves aa finne svaret ved ofringer og faste. Men ingen kunne gi et forløsende svar til seg selv og sin egen samtid, langt mindre til hele slekten. Se, da banet Gud selv veien til frelse for hver den som søker. Kristusbarnet, Gud og menneske i en person kom med svar paa alle vaare angstfylte spørsmål. "Efter at Gud fordum hadde talt mange ganger og paa mange maater til fedrene ved profetene, saa har han i disse siste dager talt til oss ved Sønnen"—Heb. 1:1. Ikke underlig da at englene sang: "Ære være Gud i det høyeste!" For julens glade budskap er ogsaa UNDERETS BUDSKAP. Jesus er aapenbarelsen av Guds største under. Derfor kalte ogsaa profeten ham Under. Det er underets Gud som møter deg i Kristus. Og dersom du med din forstand vil fatte og forklare Guds Under, da vil du havne i vantro og fortvilelse. Men hvis du selv vil la Guds Aand faa lov aa vise deg Underets Gud i Jesus, da blir du selv et under og bevis paa at Gud er Underets Gud. For det er det personlige møte med Gud ved Jesubarnets krybbe som kan gi innhold og mening for deg i julens glade budskap. Det forteller om Guds store og enestaaende gjerning for aa frelse deg. Derfor maa du komme til krybben for at det glade gudskap skal faa betydning for deg, Budskapet BLE HØRT AV MENNESKER. DET VAR FOR ALT FOLKET.

Det betyr at det ogsaa burde høres

## Sjelesorg Hos Haugianerne

I en gammel bibel i Telemark ligger et brev datert 3. februar 1882 som gir oss et innblikk i kristenlivets alvor og de kristnes ansvarskjensle for et par menneskealder siden. Den gang kunne de ikke stole paa organisasjoner og forkynnervirksomhet slik som nu. Heller ikke hadde de det store utvalg av kristelig litteratur.

Men nød for menneskers frelse kjente de. Det har vi mange beviser paa.

Hvordan fulgte de kallet til aa vitne for sine medmennesker den gang?

De reiste lange, ulendte veger for aa tale med vedkommende paa tomannshaand. Og de skrev brev.

Naturligvis gikk adskillige av de brevene tapt. De ble slengt til side og kom bort. Sannheten gikk vel inn det ene øret og ut det andre. De fikk samme skjebne som sæden langs vegen eller paa steingrunn og mellom ugras.

Men der ligger mange igjen. Som en helligdom har de gaatt i arv fra ætt. I gamle oppbyggingsbøker finner vi enkelte av mer upersonlig preg. De øvrige som har satt dypeste marker ligger i innelukte skatoll.—Den unge kvinne som fikk dette formaningsbrevet, vet vi ikke mer om enn at hun siden levde og døde som et omvendt menneske. Hennes barn ble ogsaa troende. Flere andre i slekten

av Deg, for det gjelder i høyeste grad deg, den enkelte. Og er det ennaa ikke blitt hørt av alle, er ikke Kristi fred blitt hele verdens fred, saa kan du likevel høre budskapet—du som leser dette, og faa freden til eie som budskapet bringer. Der er ingen hindring uten deg selv. La kun Jesubarnet—Fredsfyrsten gripe ditt hjerte og ta ledelsen i ditt liv. For i ham du den eneste som kan ta kommandoen paa ditt livsskip uten aa seile det paa grunn.

Den gang du var barn var det ikke de store gaver som skapte juleglede i ditt sind. Det var fortellingen om Ham som kom til verden for aa gjøre oss alle glade. Budskapet om denne glede laa likesom i luften mens vi var barn. Vi fornemmet det og det gjorde oss glade . . . Senere, da vi ble voksne forsvant gleden kanskje for oss. Vi sviktet vaar daapspakt. Vi vokste ikke i kunnskap, kjærlighet og tro. Og saa mistet vi det livet Guds Aand skapte i vaar sjel i dapens hellige stund. La naa det glade budskap om Jesus faa trenge inn i din sjel, la det faa overbevise deg om synd, og la det faa gyde tilgivelsens glede inn i ditt hjerte paa nytt. For det er det underlige ved evangeliet—det glade budskapet at det hjelper aldri noe menneske ved aa gjemme bort det som maa fram i lyset fra korset: din synd. Likevel, det store ved julebudskapet er som biskop Berggrav sier "i julen ser vi ikke korset, for skjønt juletreet er plantet i et kors, ser vi ikke dette. Det er skjult under gavene til oss." Og disse gavene er Jesus selv og hans soning for vaar synd. Tar du imot disse gaver, da blir du virkelig glad. Og da er du med aa skape fred paa jorden, for denne fred kan ikke komme paa annen maate enn gjennom de som selv har faatt fred til bytte med frykt.

I som gaar paa trange veie, Stans og

hør:

Her er dør Til all gledes eie!  
Og i huset innenfore Er det trøst,  
Himmelsk lyst, Bot for hver en taare!  
—H. Arnholt Strand.

kom visstnok til liv i Gud gjennom hennes dype, kristelige alvor.

Vi gjengir brevet i samme form som det er skrevet. Derved beholder vi best baade tidsbildet og aanden i den kristelige forkynnelse for 60—70 aar siden.

Til Anne Olsdatter!

Efterdi vi nærmer os Evigheden og har tid til at tænke, tale og skrive hvad der tjener til vor Sjæls Bedste, vil jeg herved skrive Dig et Brev, eftersom Gud give mig det i Sinde.

Jeg er saa udsat for at hykle baade i Tale og Skrift, og derfor er det mig høist fornødent at jeg lader Aanden raade, saa den rette Kraft kunde blive velsignet paa vore Hjerter.

Gud give dig Kraft til at Du kunde rive dig løs af den Snare Du er bunden i!

Fik vi se Baandene, Strikkene og den Avgrundens Fyrste ret saa kom vi nok til at grues og sige:

Jeg vil ei Verdens Lyst begjære eller dens stemme høre mere!

Men da Herskeren og Sjæleforførereren kommer saa fin, blank og med saamange Sollyse Farver, gaar det som man ser.—Man agter Verdens Liggendefæ for større Rigdom end Kristi Forsmædelse.

Tænk paa hvor dyrt Du er igjenkjøbt, og hvor saare glad han er i sine Hænders Gjæringer! Det skulde lokke dig til Omvendelse.

Det er nok hardere naar man engang har følt Guds Godhed og blevet utro, at komme tilbage igjen.

Lad ei din raske Ungdom forhindre dig fra Kronen! Tænk ikke saa at jeg vil endnu en Tid leve for mig selv, fordi jeg har dette eller hint ugjort! Det er altsammen bedrægeligt. Du kommer længere bort i Mørket.

Naar Du saa ikke formaar at gjøre mere, saa kommer den der hader Dig paa en anden Maade.

Hvad da?

Jo, med alle haande Gremmelse, Forskrækkelse, Tvilraadighed o. l. da Du har saalænge imodstaaet. Det bliver Enden, og det tror jeg Du ogsaa holder for sandt.

Men det er ikke nok.

Du maa blive Sandhed tro og lydig og blive med det i en sand Omvendelse Troende.

Lad ei Glæde eller Sorg hindre Dig fra Kronen, men bryd frem som Morgenrøden og staa op, saa Kristus kan faa lyse for Dig!

Betænk! Kristus er vor Sol baade nu og hisset. Derfor er et fornødent for os. Det hedder i Dag at sige med den forlorne Søn: Jeg vil staa op og vende tilbage til min Fader.

Jeg formaner Dig dertil!

Du er betroet et stort Pund, og det samme skal leveres tilbage igjen med Renter, og Du har ingen.

O, gid du vilde skjønne paa Naadens Tid og lade min kjærlige formaning beholde Seier hos Dig!

Giv Gud dit Hjerte! Sig Verden Farvel! Da bliver der større Glæde i Himmelen end det var tilforn! Tænk hvilken yndelig Klang der bliver i Englekor!

Kunde bare Guds utrættelige Langmodighed og Miskundhed lede Dig til Omvendelse!

Tag dette fra Gud, og forhærd ikke ditt unge Hjerte!

Jeg føler mig uværdig til at frembære disse formaninger. Man kan ikke bede Gud nok om Visdom til at tale og skrive hverandre til. Men jeg haaber dog at disse linjer skal blive

## I Brennpunktet

Ikke Rum For Jesus

Det er julekveld. Byen er stor. Ly-sene smykker den store hovedgaten og synes aa skinne mere intenst. De overskygger stjernenes herlighet paa himmelhvelvingen. Folkemassene som er vepnet med pakker skynner seg gjennom gatene med lettere skritt. Utstillingsvindueene i de store magasiner er dekorert med fantastiske, bølgende kjoler som henleder opmerk-somheten paa et nyttaars ball. Noen dager tidligere pirret disse vinduene ungdommens sanser med "Punch and Judy" utsillingen animerte eventyr-karakterer, leketøy og Santa Claus.

**Ikke rum for Jesus.**

Det store hotellet er fylt til trengsel. Salonen er fylt til mere enn trengsel. Alkoholens oprømmelse flyter i en stadig strøm. Spisesalen er overdaadig pyntet. En "crooner" skriker av full hals en ballade om en blondine. Et sving-orkester motiverer massene til rytmisk bevegelse. Generøse utstillinger av "kunst" stimulerer menneskets syndige kjød. **Ikke rum for Jesus.**

En forøverbøyet, daarlig kledd karakter skynder seg fort vekk fra den lettsindige masse. Det har vært en ganske lett sak aa tigge en god sum ekstra skanter paa juleaften. Snart vil han opdagde en kjellerrestaurant hvor han tyller i seg oprømmende drikkevarer. En ti cent vil skaffe ham tak over hodet. **Ikke rom for Jesus.**

Senen forandres til en utkant av byen. En kirke, straalende oplyst, paa et hjørne av kvartalet. Like ved siden av kirken staa en skole. Kirkeklokken ringer. Lærere og elever, Jesu hyrder og lam, marsjerer fra skolen til kirken. **Her er det rum for Jesus.** Takkesang og pris aapenbarer Guds kjærlighet til mennesker.

Atter forandres senen. Et ganske almindelig hus paa en gaard ute paa landet. Der er ingen overdaadighet aa opdagde, men alt er velordnet og velstelt baade ute og inne. Et vitnesbyrd om at her bor det arbeidsglade ordensmennesker. Ved bordet sitter en familie paa syv mennesker, far og mor og fem barn. De eter sin julekveldsmat med glade ansikter under munter, men likesom dempet samtale. Mor hadde alltid innprentet sine barn at høyroset tale ikke var høflig eller nødvendig under noen omstendighet. Da maaltidet er forbi tar husfaren fram den gamle familiebibel, den største gutten henter salmebøker og deler dem ut. Saa synger de en av de gamle kjente og kjære julesalmer, far leser evangeliet om Frelseren som ble født og lagt i en krybbe fordi det ikke var rum hverken for ham eller hans mor i herberget. Men her er det rum for Jesus baade i huset og i hjertene. Far ber til Gud og takker for Jesus. Saa synger alle en salme eller to tilslutt. **Rum for Jesus . . . Rum for Jesus . . . Vil han finne rum hos deg?**

—H. A. S.

Vaar Gud og Fader, som hisset troner, takk for hver sjel du ut av mørket tok!

Hjelp du at mange fra alle soner sitt navn maa finne i livets bok!

Hvor maa Gud dog ikke smile i sin Almagt, hver Gang et Intet vil gøre sig til noget og ham til intet.

—Democrit.

Dig til Velsignelse og Glæde i Gud. Sig dertil ja!

Saa er du meget flittig hilset. Gud give Dig styrke og kraft til Din snare Omvendelse!

And. Kvellestad, i "F.F. og R."



## MY CONFIDENCE

By Barbara C. Ryberg

The God who spoke the universe in place,  
Who hung the sun, the moon, and stars in space,  
The God whose word divided land and sea—  
This God, O precious truth, still cares for me!

The God who from an acorn grows an oak,  
Who stilled the howling tempest when He spoke,  
This God takes heed of sparrows when they fall,  
And gladly listens when His children call!

The men whom He had formed and given breath,  
Rejected Him, delivered Him to death;  
And nailed upon a cross, for them He prayed,  
And gave His life to purchase those He made.

Since He by whom the universe was planned  
Holds my tomorrows in His nail-pierced hand,  
His power and love alike are manifest;  
Whate'er tomorrow brings, His will is best.

## Feared Only Sin

When the Emperor of Constantinople arrested Chrysostom and thought of trying to make him recant, he slowly shook his head. The emperor said to his attendants, "Put him in prison." "No," said one of them, "he will be glad to go, for he delights in the presence of his God in quiet." "Well, then, let us execute him," said the Emperor. "He will be glad to die," said the attendant, "for he wants to go to heaven. I heard him say so the other day. There is only one thing that can give Chrysostom pain, and that is, to make him sin; he said he was afraid of nothing but sin. If you can make him sin, you will make him unhappy." Oh, that God would make us like Chrysostom, rather than sin!

—Moody Monthly.

## An Unfinished Painting

The artist Turner on one occasion invited a number of friends to see an unfinished painting. The canvas was a scene of confused tints and colors of light and shade; but there was nothing intelligible about it. Suddenly the artist took his brush and touched the picture with a little bit of crimson, when at once the whole picture became plain. That little bit of color gave the viewpoint to all the rest, and the scene was plain and striking. So the cross of Calvary has given the true interpretation to all the facts of history and all questions that affect the destiny of man.—A. B. Simpson.

## Supports Paper

A genuine interest in the work of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of Canada is shown by our printer, Mr. Ralph Greenwood of Wadena, Sask., who not only prints The Shepherd, but reads it too. At the close of each year he has sent to the Church his personal cheque, this year for the amount of \$50. Last year he designated that it be used for Home Missions. This year it is designated for the Bible Institute at Outlook, to help in the sending forth of workers into the fields of service. Such interest is sincerely appreciated as is also the care and attention that goes into the printing of each issue of our Church paper. For instance, did you folks ever try to print a whole page every two weeks letter by letter and not be able to read or understand a word of it, and yet Mr. Greenwood does the Norwegian page with surprising accuracy.

—J. B. H.

## THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

"And she brought forth her first-born son; and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."—Luke 2:7.

\* \* \*

This December we celebrate the 1947th anniversary of Christ's birthday. Once again songs will be sung; once again goodwill will be eminently manifest; once again gifts will be exchanged;—and—once again, Jesus will be left out in the stable.

Just think of man's perverted, contrary and bull-headed nature. To say mankind behaves stupidly is a gross understatement. It is stupid enough to risk life and limb, physically speaking, even if one does not actually lose his life—BUT how infinitely more stupid is it to purposely ignore the only means of eternal life and set out on a course that is absolutely, dead-certain to bring Death—eternal death.

It was not by accident that the men that set out to find Jesus were called WISE MEN; it was not by accident that these WISE MEN found Jesus either—they were guided to Him. It will not be the act of a stupid person if you seek Jesus; it will not be by accident that you find Him either. "Seed and ye shall find" is still the magic formula, and the only formula, that will lead us to Christ.

As you look back to Christ's birth and notice the lack of welcome that accompanied his arrival—do you not feel tempted to think—"Surely some family could have let Him into their home, or, surely all those people weren't inconsiderate, etc?"

We know—Christians know—that the Bible record is true and that Christ was not wanted in their homes then and is not wanted in our homes today—there is actually no room in our homes for Him (and to say this is not an exaggeration). Unless we receive a "new heart" nothing can ever make it possible for us to give as much as one square foot of space in our homes to Christ.

Three WISE men found Jesus—three WISE men worshipped Jesus. HUMBLE shepherds immediately sought Jesus on hearing about Him—they left the stable "glorifying and praising God." Let us learn what it means to be as WISE as these men were and as HUMBLE as those shepherds were. May God grant that many, many thousands may become wise and humble this Christmas 1947.

I take this opportunity to again wish the readers of this page a blessed Christmas season and New Year filled with God's best for each one of you.

—L. S. O.

## MORE MILWAUKEE HIGHLIGHTS

(Gleaned from the Edmonton Circuit Echo)

To the question: What was the ONE thing that particularly impressed you at the Milwaukee Convention?—the following answers were given:

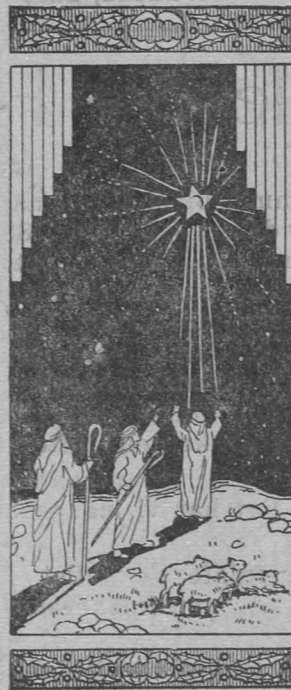
"It was really a foretaste of Heaven when six thousand Leaguers rejoiced in singing our wonderful theme song—'I Need Thee Every Hour'."—Anslaug Hanson.

"I was deeply impressed in seeing such a huge crowd of Young Luther Leaguers filled with such enthusiasm, unity, and strong endeavor to hold high and far abroad the theme 'You Need Jesus Christ'."—Sylvan Jacobson.

"It amazed me how closely the convention followed the original program which had been planned

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S LUTHER LEAGUE

LUTHER S. OLSON, Editor, Camrose, Alberta



months ahead. It was the best planned, most orderly, smooth-running convention I have ever attended."—Julius Nordstrom.

"It was wonderful to see the great masses of young people gathered in the huge auditorium for all the sessions. In our own Luther Leagues we are so prone to get discouraged when we have a small turnout, but this convention opened my eyes to see that we definitely aren't alone in our work. Although we were a tired bunch after our long trip it was a week of rich spiritual blessings. The Christ-centered messages searched my heart deeply and will be remembered for many years to come."—Betty Christenson.

"I am very thankful to God for the opportunity of having been able to attend the convention such as this one with thousands of other young people under such a theme—'You Need Jesus Christ.' The inspiring messages, the eagerness of all to attend and hear, the hospitality of all we met is something I shall remember."—Gertrude Christenson.

"It would be difficult indeed to try to single out any one thing as the one that impressed me most at our L.L. convention at Milwaukee. Truly, it was good to be there! It was inspiring to meet with thousands of Leaguers under such a personal theme. It made one realize how large our church is, yet how united we are in our faith."—Alice Thompson.

"The Milwaukee convention not only proved to me the priceless value of Christian fellowship, but through the conference sessions were discussed practically every Christian problem."—Helen Sather.

"You all remember how Jesus fed the five thousand up there on the mountain by the Sea of Galilee. The convention in Milwaukee was another time of such feasting. Young people—over five thousand strong, gathered at the feet of Jesus to eat of the bread of life, broken and distributed by the disciples of Jesus Christ. It was a mountain-top experience I shall never forget."—Margaret Braaten.

"I shall never forget the profound silence that fell over the crowd when the news was told us of the sudden death of one of our Leaguers, Don Wesenberg, reminding us that God is still the Master of our lives."—Ted Hanson.

No diet is sufficient for the health of soul that does not contain at least one portion of daily prayer, one of meditation on God's Word, one of praise to Him, and one of service to mankind.—Charles H. Spurgeon.

It is the Word of God that does the work of God.

## CHRISTIAN

By CONNIE CALENBERG

O God, that I should bear the name of "Christian",  
Should know Thy love, and share Thy wondrous grace;  
That I should find Thy rich, undying mercy;  
That I should gaze upon Thy holy face.  
I cannot fathom, Lord, such condescension,  
As day by day I feel Thy nail-scarred hand,  
As hour by hour I find Thy love ne'er changing,  
A rock beneath, where once was sinking sand.  
To think that at Thy cross I found forgiveness,  
The washing white of sin, salvation, free;  
To think that I, unworthy, sinful, helpless,  
May walk the paths of fellowship with Thee.  
O God, my soul solicits every blessing,  
Thy cross to bear; Thy perfect will to do;  
That in this life the world might see Thee, Saviour,  
Might call me "Christian," Lord, and find it true.

—Moody Monthly.

## IT WAS CHRISTMAS EVE

The narrow street was partially sheltered from the relentless truculence of the wind; the cruel wind that swept mercilessly across the barren desolate fields that the scanty snowfall had failed to cover. The inky darkness dared not deny the tumbled masses of scorched bricks and charred poles that irrelevantly littered both sides of the street. The lane was deserted, save for a woman who sat near one of the largest piles of bricks. Her haggard face, framed by a few sad wisps of hair, told of great weariness and painful lack of food. She wore no cloak for what appeared to have been her cloak was wrapped around the little child that she held in her thin, wasted arms. She was too weak for tears, too cold to be sensible to the pain that racked her breast. Her eyes closed and opened again to scan the heavens, coming to rest on the lone star that had deigned to shine on that cruel night. The star seemed near, very near. A lambent light flickered in the woman's eyes and died. Her rigid frame sank to the ground. The child woke with a start, calling weakly for his mother. But the mother made no answer . . .

There is a sharp contrast in the ways the peoples of the world will spend this Christmas. Can we, whom God has so bountifully blessed, see our fellowmen starve and freeze and do nothing to help? The cries, "I hunger," "I freeze," are coming louder and more insistent from the starving millions in Europe. Christian, are you working, giving all you can? Or are you waiting for the time when you will not be so busy, when your salary will be increased? Help is needed now. God has given us only now to work. He does not promise tomorrow. Christ says, "Go ye" now. The world, today, under the imminent shadow of self-destruction, may in a few years be a seething mass of flames and fervent heat. A dark undercurrent of fear is taking possession of men's hearts. We must work now. Souls must be won, the hungry fed, the naked clothed in the name of Christ. Let us pray, work, and give our all. We must!

(Sent in by Anonymous Contributor)

He is a heartless man who allows what he does to be a stumblingblock for another.